Hibiscus Multifidus

HIBÍSCUS MULTÍFIDUS.

(MANY-PARTED LEAVED HIBISCUS.)

CLASS. MONADELPHIA.

ORDER. POLYANDRIA.

NATURAL ORDER. MALVÀCEÆ.

GENERIC CHARACTER.—*Vide* vol. iii. p. 147.

SPECIFIC CHARACTER.—*Plant* a deciduous shrub. *Stem* smooth, roundish, much branching, rather succulent. *Leaves* divided down to their base into numerous linear segments, and these again sometimes subdivided, or producing unequal lateral lobes, quite glabrous. *Calyx* composed of five equal, long, lanceolate, acuminate segments, almost the length of the corolla. *Corolla* of a very pale azure colour, tinged with crimson at the orifice, and deepening into a richer crimson towards the base.

No one can question that the explorers of the Swan River Colony have contributed more towards supplying our gardens with new plants, than has been done since such extensive importations of seeds were made from New Holland. And though the number of novel species now in a seedling state amounts to several hundreds, we have not hitherto witnessed one in flower which promises to be more ornamental than the handsome *Hibiscus*, of which a figure is annexed. Circumstances unfavourable to its full development rendered the flowers rather tardy in expanding last autumn; but, when those are more propitious in another season, it will most probably blossom as liberally as any of its congeners.

It will be recollected, by persons acquainted with the genus, that the flowers of the majority of its species open very slowly, and are exceedingly fugitive. If this plant, therefore, should prove to be of a similar habit, no wonder need be felt. We do not anticipate that such will ultimately be the case. The probability is only suggested to prevent future disappointment.

Divested of all considerations concerning the expansion of its inflorescence, its outline and leaves are eminently pleasing; while the blooms, when properly unfolded, are superlatively lovely. The light delicate azure which constitutes the standard colour of the latter, is shown to excellent advantage by the finely-rounded and gradually opening cup of the corolla, and merges beautifully into a lively crimson towards the centre, which is again prettily contrasted with the yellow and brown of the staminal processes.

Nothing can be more symmetrical than the contour of the specimen which was cultivated at Messrs. Henderson's, Pine Apple Place, and bloomed there for the first time in August 1839. It begins branching within about six inches of the roots, and proceeds to the height of three or four feet, forming a regular bush of a conical shape. The deeply divided leaves also assist in filling up this outline, and